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ABSTRACT

Five commonly used basal readers from grades one through three were studied to determine how they portrayed and represented older adults. It was hypothesized that older adults would be portrayed as active, contributing, and productive members of society and that they would be represented in the basals in proportion to their numbers in the population. The basals examined were (1) "Shoulder High," The Economy Company; (2) "Glad to Meet You," Ginn; (3) "Magic Times," Macmillan; (4) "Ten Times Round," Ginn; and (5) "Weavers," Houghton Mifflin. Each story in each basal was read, and pictures accompanying the stories were studied to see how the aged were portrayed--their physical appearance and hair coloration, and work and life style. The frequency with which stories of the aged appeared in the basals was also analyzed. The results indicated that the number of stories about older adults increased with grade level, so that the third grade basals were statistically more accurate in portraying the aged in proportion to their population numbers. The older adult's physical appearance did not seem to be realistically portrayed. Most of the men wore pants with suspenders, and the women were usually portrayed as obese, unattractively dressed, and wearing an apron signifying kitchen work. The first and second grade basals rarely showed the elderly engaged in productive work, while the third grade basals were more realistic in portraying active, working senior citizens. (A summary of research related to attitudes toward the aging in education, industry, and society concludes the document.) (HTH)

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HOW ARE SENIOR CITIZENS PORTRAYED IN BASAL READERS?

by

DORIS F. ROSEN

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ABSTRACT

Five commonly used basal readers from grades one to three were studied to determine how senior citizens were portrayed and represented in our society. The results indicated that in first grade children rarely read realistic stories; in second grade they appear more frequently; in third grade there seem to be improvements in the frequency and realistic images of the senior citizens. A list of characteristics revealed that senior citizens actively engaged in productive work and a realistic life style with positive physical appearances. These results indicate a need for young children to be exposed to more realistic stories about senior citizens.

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most dramatic shifts in the United States population has been the number of people reaching sixty-five years of age and over. This population has increased from 3% in 1900 to 10% today. Within the next forty years this age group is projected to expand to 20%. Because of this, society is entering an era where there will be increasing focus on older persons, their needs and potentials.

Americans are inclined to distort their view of the aging. Growing old has been equated with sickness, decline and dependency. In reality, aging should be viewed as a process where older people are productive, active and contributing members of society. Sally S. Turner's (1978) research examined six basals from grades one to six and found that positive images of the elderly are almost missing in the stories children read. She pointed out that warmth, appreciation, and human interaction are needed to bridge the age span difference between the elderly and the young and that our literature should be representative of the population.

Grandma Moses started to paint at age seventy-eight. Bernard Baruch was an adviser to presidents until age ninety. Some of the country's finest legal decisions were handed down by Supreme Court justices who were well past seventy. Mary V. Fusco (1981) concludes from her study of Childrens Ideas Toward the Aged, that, if ideas and stereotypes are to be altered and replaced by more positive ideas, society in general,

along with the families and schools, needs to become more involved. The interaction of diverse age groups living and learning and growing together can produce positive change in stereotypes and attitudes toward the elderly. Angela Dowdy (1982) drew similar conclusions from her study, Sexism and Ageism in Basal Readers. She states that if the schools are to educate and develop the full potential of all children, the readers they are exposed to must realistically portray people, young, old, male and female. Positive images of the elderly and improvement in their portrayal are necessary so that children may view becoming old as a satisfying and rewarding period of life.

The schools have the opportunity to develop a realistic understanding of the aged.

The research in the field of the aging tends to be varied. They range from attitudes of the aging to implications for the future. The majority of research seems to reveal that there is a need to change the image of the aging.

C. McPherson Turner's (1980) research states that as the aged increase, so does the role of the health educator. Curricula to develop a realistic understanding of the aging, as a natural life process of growth and development, are needed. All persons stand to benefit from an improved understanding of the aged.

N. Alan Sheppard (1981) states that older adults in large numbers are not yet ready to retire from life. They want to choose from a variety of roles. He feels that vocational edu-

cation must step in and assist the many older people who do not want to be idle. Few vocational educators are accepting the challenge and actually responding to the need.

Judy Hochman (1981) interviewed seven women in their seventies. To her surprise, the women painted the brighter aspects of aging. The author feels there is a need for increased knowledge of later adulthood and that this could contribute to a more satisfying old age.

M.D. Metropoulos' (1981) research indicates that individuals retiring need to be aware of options. A program of life long learning is more essential today. From childhood, an individual should be prepared for career changes. The more an individual is aware of this, the better able he will be to cope with retirement. As the retired asserts his rights and makes choices, changes will occur.

A.J. Kingston (1981) believes that although many of the elderly do not read regularly, reading does improve the quality of life of the elderly.

C. Pepper (1980), a United States congressman, states there are many problems facing the elderly. We must not compromise the funding for the elderly and assure the golden years free from fear and doubt.

D. Sinick's (1980) research reveals that all of the elderly are not alike. They are different with respect to attitudes toward life.

Lee Bennett Hopkins (1978) feels it is difficult for many children to understand that aging is a natural process

we all undergo. Many school systems in the United States are focusing in on the problem by adopting Grandparent Day, visiting senior housing centers, and involving senior citizens in Grandparent Storytelling days. Mr. Hopkins lists many books with positive views of the aged which can be used to introduce discussions and projects. The author also familiarizes us with the Gray Panthers, an organization with services for the aged. Making students sensitive to the elderly's feelings, needs and concerns is an important part of preparing them for their approaching tomorrow.

Clifford J. Laube's (1980) views are a little unorthodox, but make a lot of sense. He believes the greatest hope for the elderly lies with their complete reintegration into the rest of the society. We should rid ourselves of government programs which single out the elderly. The sooner this is done, the better it will be for all Americans.

Ruth Bennett (1976) also believes that the aged should not be segregated. There should be a concerted effort to integrate them into society. The aged are all of us. The media does much to down grade the elderly and should begin showing elderly people as real and complex individuals. The elementary schools should introduce courses that promote positive contacts with the elderly. Research is needed to undo the harm that has already been done.

Research findings pertaining to the aged in children's literature seem to agree. Ansello (1976) and Bunin (1977) agree that the aged are poorly portrayed.

At a seminar on "How Aging is Changing", sponsored by the National Council of Women of the United States at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel on September 30, 1982, the message that came forth was: we are not enhancing society's image of the aging and we must enhance the self-image of the aging.

HYPOTHESIS

To add information on this topic, it was hypothesized that senior citizens are portrayed in basal readers as we normally find them in our society. It was assumed that Senior Citizens will be portrayed as active, contributing and productive members of society if the schools teach this information in a realistic manner and that they are represented in proportion to their existence in this population.

DEFINITIONS

Age Stereotype - the portrayal of aging persons as stumbling, bumbling, senile and often comic fools.
Elderly - interchangeable with senior citizen.
Population - a group of people sharing the same environment.
Portrayal - a picture or image of what you want to describe.
Represented - placing an image in someone's mind.
Senior Citizen - any individual, male or female, over sixty-five.
Stereotype - a conclusion drawn from an opinion and held in common by a group.

SPECIFIC PROCEDURES

Five basal reader series from grades one to three are included in this research study. They are Shoulder High, The Economy Co., 1980, Glad to Meet You, Ginn and Co., 1982, Magic Times, Macmillan Publishing Co., 1980, Ten Times Round, Ginn and Co., 1982 and Weavers, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1982. Each story in each basal was read and pictures accompanying the stories were studied. Then each basal was analyzed to see how the aged are portrayed, their appearance, physical appearance and hair coloration, their work and life style. How frequently stories of the aged appear in the basal was also analyzed.

RESULTS

As shown by the data in Table x, as a child progresses from first to second to third grade, the number of stories about senior citizens increases. Although ten percent of our population are senior citizens with a projected twenty percent within the next forty years, less than this percentage are found in first grade materials in these books with highest percentages at later grade levels. The second and third grade basals seem to be more realistic statistically.

The senior citizens' physical appearance does not appear to be realistically portrayed. In the first grade, only 3.3% of senior citizens are realistically portrayed, while in the second grade, it is 9.1% and 8.3%. In the third grade, 9.6% and 14.2% of the stories portray the senior citizens' physical appearance realistically. Mostly we see the men wearing pants with suspenders. The women are usually seen with an apron, signifying work in the kitchen. They frequently appear obese and are rarely stylishly dressed. Rarely do we see an older man wearing a business suit. In only one newspaper story was there a gray haired man dressed in a shirt and pants while at work in the printing room. Two other stories depicted doctors dressed professionally. Graying hair seems to be a realistic physical characteristic among the aged.

The first grade basal seems to be void of the elderly actively engaged in productive work. In one of the second grade books, 2.7%, and in the other, 6.6%, are actively engaged in productive work. In only one story in the second grade basal

TABLE x

HOW SENIOR CITIZENS ARE PORTRAYED IN BASALS AT GRADES 1, 2, 3 (N=158)

Characteristics	Grade 1 Shoulder High Economy Co. (N=30)		Grade 2 Glad to Meet You Ginn & Co. (N=33)		Grade 2 Magic Times Macmillan Pub. Co. (N=36)		Grade 3 Ten Times Round Ginn & Co. (N=31)		Grade 3 Weavers Houghton Mifflin Co. (N=28)		Total Basals (N=158)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Realisitic Physical Appearance	1	3.3	3	9.1	3	8.3	3	9.6	4	14.2	14	8.8
Stereotyped Physical Appearance	2	6.7	2	6.6	2	5.5	1	3.2	3	10.7	10	6.3
Graying Hair Coloration	2	6.7	4	12.1	5	13.8	4	12.9	6	21.4	21	13.2
Actively Engaged in Productive Work	0	0	2	6.6	1	2.7	3	9.6	4	14.2	10	6.3
Realistic Life Style	1	3.3	3	9.1	3	8.3	3	9.6	4	14.2	14	8.8
Stereotyped Life Style	1	3.3	0	0	2	5.5	1	3.2	2	7.1	6	3.7
Frequency of Stories Containing Aged	2	6.7	4	12.1	5	13.8	6	19.3	7	25	24	15.1

do the children see a man getting a newspaper ready for print and a truck driver using a two-way radio.

In the third grade basal, 9.6% and 14.2% of the senior citizens are actively engaged in productive work, thus appearing more realistic. One story portrays a man of seventy in a rocking chair, stating that at seventy he must retire because his boss feels that he is too old to work. The use of the rocking chair may be a symbolic expression of old age to youngsters.

As shown by the data in Table x, in the third grade, four stories, or 14.2%, depict the realistic life style of the senior citizen. Of the four stories, two clearly show the senior citizens' life styles. One tells of a young woman, of long ago, wanting to become a nurse and helping an old doctor. The doctor's physical appearance is very professional. In the other story, a retired professor is having fun clamming at the beach. Rarely do children see the senior citizen enjoying an avocation. Very young children seem to be lacking stories about senior citizens and their life styles. As a child progresses, the stories seem to be more frequently realistically portrayed.

CONCLUSIONS

Even though all of the basals studied had current copyright dates, there seems to be a great deal lacking in the way our senior citizens are represented and portrayed.

In the first grade, children rarely read realistic stories about active, contributing, and productive senior citizens.

As a child progresses to second grade, the stories become more frequent but they still lack realistic images of our senior citizens. By third grade, there seems to be an improvement in the frequency of the stories and a more realistic image of the senior citizens' life style and engagement in productive work.

Current positive exposure of our senior citizens seems to have made some impact on the material found in basal series, but a lot more has to be done. The positive life styles of active, productive, and contributing senior citizens should be incorporated into the texts as well as the basals from grade one on to high school.

Elliot Wiggentin's, The Foxfire Book, points out that, "Daily our grandparents are moving out of our lives. When they're gone magnificent and haunting stories go with them, and what a loss". Young children should read more realistic stories about senior citizens and their life styles so that they may identify positively with them.

AGING: RELATED RESEARCH

The research compiled reflects some of the current trends, issues, and attitudes toward the aging in education, industry, and society.

Mary Sohngen's and Robert J. Smith's (1978) study of the texts of 127 poems under "old age" in Grinds Index of Poetry indicates strong negative attitudes about physical, emotional and social losses. Reading poetry is a sensitizing experience which serves to reinforce negative stereotypes persistant in our culture.

The authors hope that their study and others like it will help scientists become more aware of negative attitudes toward old age and that "humanists" will be able to apply this knowledge and their skills to combat this problem. They suggest several methods that may be interesting and valuable. Poems could be examined in terms of their geographical or historical origin to determine cultural differences in images of old age. Poems could also be examined according to ages of poets to discover the different views of old and young poets. Finally they suggest that the work of individual poets might be analyzed to see if views of old age change with advancing age..

Gladys F. Blue (1978) did a detailed content analyses study to determine how the aging have been portrayed in childrens' realistic books published in the United States during the period 1945-75. The author reviewed 125 books and defined the aging as any individual who is at least of the age that he or she could be a grandparent of the child for whom the books are written, as well as any character described in

the books as old, aged or elderly. The study was divided into eight categories: (1) demographic portrayal; (2) physical characteristics; (3) state of health; (4) personality traits; (5) activities; (6) situational aspects of choice, dependence and change; (7) conveyance of the concept of aging or old; and (8) relationships and patterns of social intervention. She found, contrary to Ansello's (1976-77) research, that the overall characterizations of the elderly analyzed were neither negative nor stereotyped, but varied in presentation. The author suggests relevant research could be done with children, adults and elderly persons from different socioeconomic backgrounds. This type of investigation could provide useful information and the understanding that these variables play with vicarious experiences presented in literature. Finally the author believes further studies should be conducted to determine the effects of books on childrens' attitudes and beliefs.

A contrasting view by Edward F. Ansello (1978) in his study of aging indicates that children may be learning negative stereotypes of growing old through literature. The author examined the portrayal of age in 656 books in a Maryland Library System in which the following were analyzed: the presence of older characteristics, their race and sex, their relationship to main characters, their occupation roles, their behavior, their picturization, and their physical and personality descriptions. Only 16.46% contained older characters. Females were poorly represented and minority characters

underrepresented. When old characters were given an occupation, it was generally outside the experience of the average child. Older characters mainly performed in a routine manner and their personalities were described as poor, sad, wise, and dear. Negative evaluations far outweigh positive ones. The author feels that educators must actively intervene and be used as a source to correct these errors. Stereotypes prevent full human development of those doing the stereotyping and the stereotyped.

Carol Sekfeldt, Alice Golper, Kathy Serock, and Richard K. Jantz (1978) also found that children, when interviewed, responded negatively when asked how they felt about being old. The authors feel that the schools can combat this by exposing children to positive and realistic books about the elderly. A common theme in books focusing on the elderly is the relationships of the child and grandparent, and the portrayal of older people in diverse roles with different skills and life styles.

Contact with the elderly and reading a variety of books about older persons to and for children is suggested. A grandparent program in the schools provides realistic contact and positive images of the elderly. When we present realistic information and expose them to books about the elderly, then children can decide for themselves what the elderly are really like.

Denise C. Storey (1979) had similar results when she presented a study of ageism to fifth graders. She found that

she had difficulty finding a teacher who would let her present this study in their classrooms. When this obstacle was surmounted, she found that both the teacher and students participated in the study. Several activities were included in the study. Initially the children wrote down their impressions of the aged. Then the author's seventy year old ex-teacher, grandmother came to the classroom to be interviewed by the children. The class was amazed that this stylishly dressed woman rode a horse to school, climbed trees, and had ridden a motorcycle. She presented the positive aspects of being old. The last sessions were devoted to discussing various book characters and plots from the classroom library. By combining real experiences with the elderly and reading about them, children can evaluate the images presented and determine if the literature is realistic or stereotyped.

Margo Sorgman, Marilou Sorensen, and Marilyn Johnson (1979) list the many activities that children can do in the classroom to raise their consciousness about old people and their aging process. Through these activities, students can approach the concept of ageism as social scientists, doing, collecting and analyzing data regarding the life styles, economic plight, cultural traditions and contributions of older people. They can also recognize the continuity between their youthfulness and potential agedness. By being involved in these activities, children can begin to consider the potential old person in themselves with more sensitivity.

Herbert L. Dunn (1964) focuses on dynamic maturity rath-

er than education for aging. He states that the task of education is to teach each person how to catch his balance, to keep it in a changing world, both for society as a whole and for the individual person. The six components of balance are: chemical balance, neuromuscular balance, balance between the individual and society, balance between mind and body, and balance between exertion and rest or leisure. He also contends that teachers will become aware of the importance of developing creativity in every person. In concluding, he lists the reasons why he wants to transfer education for the aging into dynamic maturity.

1. It is easier to interest younger people in education for dynamic maturity.
2. Education for maturity is a life time process.
3. The process of aging is intertwined with the process of growth and maturation so that aging cannot be considered as a thing apart.
4. By emphasizing care and nurture of the body throughout life, we can minimize deterioration of the body.
5. Development of a person's mind and spirit so that he will have resources to fall back on in old age must begin when a person is young.
6. Changing the image of the aging can only be done when old people are enthusiastic over the idea of dynamic maturity.
7. The best place to do something for the aging is in the local community where the community must take a

positive view of aging.

Jerry Bergman (1980) points out that ageism, not sexism or racism, is the most widespread form of discrimination in American society today. I concur with him, but his solution seems impractical. He believes that students should be placed in schools according to aptitude and not age. He also believes children do not prefer their peers but are forced to segregate by age for many reasons. The most important reason is the school's policy of putting students in classrooms according to age.

Ageism is more prevalent in America today than ever before. In the past, children had more contact with people of all ages and different worlds of work. Young children associating with adults in their thirties, fifties, and seventies have the advantage of learning a great deal about life and the values these adults have developed. The author summarizes that by associating with a wider variety of ages, one can be humanized and made into a real person, capable of feeling and thinking at a human level.

Walter Gantz, Howard M. Gartengerg, and Cindy K. Rainbow (1980) conducted a study to find out how the elderly were represented in magazine advertisements. The magazines surveyed were Ladies Home Journal, MS, People, Playboy, Readers Digest, Science Illustrated and Time. They found that women were underrepresented in magazine advertisements in comparison to the general population. The elderly were seen in positive images only because the advertising was about a product

that the advertiser wanted to be sold. Nevertheless, the elderly are not considered to play a major role in the consumer society.

The significance of the gradual aging of America resulting in public T.V. access programs which can multiply the outreach and effectiveness of many organizations and services was found by Michael Real, Hayes L. Anderson, and Marilyn H. Harrington (1980). Older men and women watch more total hours of television than any other group. Television serves as a companionship function in the lives of these older people and as a result, a number of television demonstration projects have been set up to increase their participation in the medium.

By actually involving senior citizens in the television process, the project PACE was developed. PACE capitalizes on two unique San Diego resources: the largest concentration of senior citizens in the nation and the largest single cable television company in the United States. By drawing together community groups, human service agencies and education institutions, an effective video access project can improve the availability and relevance of public information, increase government responsiveness, and increase self-determination for the elderly population. Here we see a new relationship between television and the older person.

Details of how thirty-two specialists evaluated the written performance of four secretaries, aged 24 to 61, were reported by Donald F. Schwab and Herbert G. Henemen (1978).

Age stereotypes did not have as strong an impact as anticipated. Younger participants tended to rate older and younger secretaries positively. Older participants, depending on their view of age, tended to rate older secretaries negatively. On the whole, the study did not show as much age stereotyping as was anticipated. The authors recommend future studies sampling heterogeneous groups for evaluation in terms of age.

On the other hand, Benson Rosen and Thomas H. Jerdee (1977), in their survey, found that because of age, many employees were being discriminated against. Many managers see the older employee as rigid and lacking creativity and thus, the elderly become potential victims of unjust treatment and have fewer career options.

While statistics seem bleak, the economic realities make change inevitable. Our society will be forced to consider alternatives to mandatory retirement with emphasis on part-time work and flexible work hours. The idea that careers should end at a fixed age is an obsolete theory.

Cash J. Korvalski and Joseph Cengemi (1978) describe the characteristics of the aging.

In China and India and many other countries, the elderly are revered. Many individuals excel in later life. Sophocles wrote Oedipus et Colonus at ninety. We need to tap the ability and dormant talent of the aged.

Mandatory retirement hurts the aged financially and psychologically. Age does little to affect the individual's

power to learn. For many, working part-time would be the solution. There are problems associated with the process of aging, but highly motivated people compensate for them.

Because they are deprived of work, many are lonely and isolated. Worthwhile work and productivity are related to one's feelings of self-worth, self-importance, and self-respect.

The authors review Maslow's concept of safety needs and aging. The levels involving self-esteem and self-fulfillment are of primary importance to the aged. As a person advances in age in the United States, his productivity and self-reliance become thwarted due to cultural stereotypes. This is unfortunate because by failing the aged, we fail our youth who will someday become old.

Aileen Pace Nilsen (1978) compares the relationship between ageism and sexism. To test out the hypothesis that old men are more highly thought of in our culture than old women, the author conducted a study. Eighty-two informants were given five minutes to list famous people or celebrities in the younger set, thirty or younger, and celebrities in the older set, fifty or older. The informants included males and females ranging between twelve and sixty. Many younger men and women were listed, but in the over fifty cateogry, many more men were listed than women. The author feels that to be aware of ageism and sexism is of little value unless we do something about it.

She lists activities that can be done in the classroom

which can combat socially limiting attitudes.

1. Provide children with opportunities to know and appreciate many different old people.
2. Be open about your age.
3. Make a class book or bulletin board about grandparents.
4. Present interesting new books which are non-stereotyped.
5. Avoid using textbooks and presenting stories that portray old people as foolish..
6. Make a special effort to inspire girls to academic achievement, and make them realize they need to store up lasting values..

Two conferences concerned with problems of the aged are reported by Ronald Gross and Mary Jo Gibson.

Ronald Gross (1977) reports the results of life living conference at the Renaissance Center in Detroit, Michigan. The conference heightened programs and projects that are bringing learning and strength in the lives of millions of Americans: children and "grandpersons" sharing art experiences in classrooms, mid-career adult educators searching for new challenges in their lives and work, seniors exploring new roles for the aged, Hispanic Americans learning English, young people changing their life prospects through adult education classes, health professionals upgrading themselves in a Boston clinic, and Chicagoans seeking self-understanding through a Human Potential Workshop.

The life learning movement was widely praised but challenges are still to be met in the areas of the aged, handicapped, and illiterate. It was also recommended that legislators help formulate life long learning over the next decade.

Mary Jo Gibson (1982) reports that the U.N. World Assembly on Aging will meet in Vienna from July 26 to August 6th, 1982. Some of the issues to be discussed are income security, health, housing, social services, and education. The World Assembly has great potential for inspiring some positive changes in national policies which directly affect older people. It is hoped that it will encourage nations to expand programs for the elderly. It has a direct conscious raising value and it is a direct statement to governments that they can no longer ignore the needs of the aging in social and economic developments.

The World Assembly on Aging has spurred the U.N. to devote greater attention to programs and research activities for the aging. The interchange that has resulted from the World Assembly Program in reporting activities among governments, gerontologists, and service providers may be its greatest outcome.

Hy Hirsch (1978) repeats the outcome of these conferences by confirming how important it is for the educated senior citizen to continue his education after retirement. He describes the purpose and function of the I.R.P. (Institute for Retired Professionals). The I.R.P. was established in 1962 at the New School. It offers retirees the opportunity

to structure their leisure time in roles as teachers, reporters, students, leaders, and activists. Psychologically, retirees need to develop new institutional ties to replace those they had while at work.

The I.R.P. has helped to set up do-it-yourself programs nationally as well as locally. It has helped direct programs at dozens of universities.

It provides a diversity of needs from the non-participant, learner, student and researcher, to the born leader. It is a learning community.

The author feels it is unwise to mix the educated with the general population of retirees. It is a waste not to use their skills and talents. Researchers are beginning to see that some of the initiative and responsibility for creating new role opportunities will have to come from the old themselves.

Jean Gasen Romaniuk (1978) conducted a workshop with older adults to teach creative thinking. Most of the participants were educated women about seventy years of age. They were given a different creative activity for each of the six weeks of the workshop. One of the activities cited was to write a short paragraph utilizing unrelated words. The results were remarkable. The author thoroughly enjoyed working with these women and now has a strong belief in the creative potential of older adults.

Marion Perlmetter (1979) used a variety of memory tasks to test males and females in their 20's and 60's with high

school to doctoral level education. The tasks tested were word memory, word knowledge, memory knowledge, memory monitoring, fact memory, and memory strategy. She found that the more highly educated subjects performed better on all memory tasks. This complicates the general perspectives of the memory of the aging. It also suggests that in order to have an accurate portrayal of the aged, more investigations using a broad range of tasks will have to be done.

A popular opinion held by many educators was that older people couldn't really be taught. Research is proving otherwise. A unique project sponsored by the office of Research in the English Department of the College of Arts and Science at Lehigh University was taught by Barbara Jensen Osinski. Two classes were involved. Ten older students were included in one class and there were none in the other. Both classes studied the life cycle in twentieth century literature.

Many people feel that the education of older people is a luxury or another form of leisure for them. Most of the older students in Osinski's class felt that this experience was anything but leisurely.

The impression that the younger students got from the older ones was that the older ones cared about the class. Their discussions were a refreshing change and they had a stimulating effect on the class.

All ten of the students were given scholarships to participate in the project and were selected on the basis of the short essays they submitted. Students whose essays indicated

an academic level comparable to a typical second semester freshman at Lehigh were chosen. None had an education beyond the first year of college.

Although the younger students accepted the older ones from the beginning, they showed significant positive changes at the end of the class toward intergenerational learning and also toward aging.

The older students had high opinions of the younger ones, but they too modified their opinions at the end of the class. They learned to be a little more patient and to accept more varieties of opinions.

For the older student it provided the education they had always wanted, a chance to test themselves, and a sense of accomplishment.

Organizing an exciting and challenging multidisciplinary student interest group at the University of Georgia is described by Jonelle Poole, Jean Keller, and Craig Weidman (1981). In 1979, the University of Georgia was awarded a two-year demonstration grant by the National Council on Aging to establish a campus-based service center for students interested in internships and practicums working with older adults. The aim of the grant was to increase the awareness of older adult's needs and means of addressing them, supporting the professional development of students interested in gerontology, and encouraging and providing opportunities for intergenerational contacts.

The students, aged 18 to 78, had backgrounds in every-

thing from art to zoology. The various disciplines of the students helped to make up a variety of talents and skills.

The first major project, a "Santa Hotline", was successful. Older men and women from a local senior center were asked to work on this project by serving as Santa and Mrs. Claus. There was a brief training period. Santa and Mrs. Claus expressed their delight in bringing happiness to youngsters during this special time of year.

The next project was an intergenerational fashion show during May, Older Americans Month. The goals were to deepen an awareness of how dress and appearance can enhance the attitudes people have toward themselves, and to help people use older clothes to improve their wardrobe. Over 125 people viewed models of various shapes and ages spinning and twirling in lovely unique fashions. The intergenerational show will long be remembered. Accomplishing two service projects through the efforts of a few determined students brought members a feeling of satisfaction and reward. The group has shown that students of all ages can work together to provide services to the elderly, and that the community as well as the campus can benefit from this.

Vern Bullough, Bonnie Bullough, and Maddalena Muro (1978) were concerned with the problems of intellectual and creative achievement in 18th century Scotland and 15th century Florence. Their research reveals that achievement was continuous over the whole life span and that one of the most significant variables was longevity.

The authors present a profile of the typical Scottish achiever. In this study they tried to use women as well as men. As a result, 364 men and 11 women who had achieved intellectual significance were profiled. The typical achiever belonged to the Church of Scotland, lived in the Midlands and was classified as upper-middle class. He went to the parish school and from there on to the University. As an adult, he married, had two or three children, became part of the upper-middle class and lived seventy years.

Although there was not as much information on the 15th century Florence research, it was noted that at that time, the medium age was under twenty and that 30% of the achievers lived beyond seventy.

The authors imply from the research that achievement is related to the ability to survive if not in full health at least with the ability to function and to produce. To be recognized as an achiever means to live long enough to begin to savor over accomplishments. Few people in the past who achieved eminence died young. The authors conclude that since people are living longer, retirees should not resign themselves to a life of travel and recreation but continue to build their own reputations.

Paul Mussen's, Marjorie Hanzik's, and Dorothy Eichorn's (1982) findings are consistent with a number of studies indicating that among older individuals, current good health, secure socioeconomic standing as well as high levels of sexual and social activity are associated with strong feelings of

satisfaction. Married men and women with above average incomes, ages thirty and thirty-five, were interviewed and then approximately forty years later, at about seventy, reinterviewed. The men at thirty who had good health, physical stamina, emotional stability, energy, self-confidence, and job satisfaction remained this way throughout their lives.

Women who were cheerful, satisfied with their lot, self-assured, and poised, appeared to remain this way throughout their lives. The authors indicate that satisfaction in later years can be predictive even before middle age.

John Skoglund (1979) examines the attitudes toward social relations of the elderly in Sweden in two age samples, ages thirty to sixty-five and seventy to seventy-five, and explains the various correlates that were associated with these attitudes. The questions explored were: How are the elderly in Sweden perceived of with respect to the dimensions of Work, Social Work, Gatherings, Dwelling, Welfare and Administration? What is the opinion of the general public as compared with the attitudes of the elderly themselves?

The adults sampled were 333 non-retired participants, ages thirty, forty-five, sixty, and sixty-five. The retirees consisted of 243 participants, ages seventy and seventy-five.

The measures were age, education, sex, occupation, residence and social position.

Young, well-educated females were more positively inclined and tended to perceive the elderly as suffering from a lower degree of welfare. There was not such a clear pattern

among the retirees. The well-educated were positive toward Gatherings and perceived welfare to be relatively low.

The results indicate the many facets of the survey. There were similar as well as different views between adults and retirees. The general contention that society's view of the aged is related to the self-view of the aged themselves received only partial support. Adult females perceived the elderly more positively than adult males did. Among retirees, females were positive only toward work.

The results clearly indicate the multidimensional character of the perception of elderly people's social life. The positive perception among adults indicates social awareness especially among younger well-educated females. The study also suggests that society approves and expects interaction from the elderly. The perceptions among the elderly are more differentiated. It is suggested that they approve of continued involvement in previous social roles but seem slightly reluctant to engage in new activities.

Nationally, Sharon Johnson (1983) of the New York Times Career Section reports that the geriatric field offers a promising future.

Mrs. Johnson points out that Marilyn Shilkoff gave up her job as an aeronautical engineer because it lacked social contacts and enrolled in graduate school to study gerontology. After earning a doctorate in education at Columbia Teachers College, Mrs. Shilkoff, at 50, went to work as the research director of the Academy for Gerontological Education and De-

velopment in the Bronx. She developed a buzzer system for aged residents of the community who were worried about crime, has helped the aged find jobs, and has written several resource manuals.

Experts feel this was a good choice because of the increase in the number of older Americans and the greater demands on facilities they will require. The population over sixty-five is growing about twice as fast as the general population creating jobs in health care, finance, and recreation and causing the government and private industry to restructure existing jobs.

Dr. Robert N. Butler, Professor of Geriatrics at Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York, foresees more residency programs that will provide up to three years of education for doctors who want to specialize in the care of the elderly.

Dr. James Schultz, Professor of Economics at Brandeis University, anticipates jobs for those who want to meet the needs of the healthy aged.

Dr. Ruth Bennett, Director of Geriatrics and Gerontology at Columbia University, foresees an easier time getting jobs if the students have some training or experience in working with the elderly and if they major in the humanities and social sciences.

Those high school graduates who want to work as homemakers for the aged as well as Ph.D.'s who want to do research, will find jobs. There also will be jobs for journalists who can write about the concerns of the elderly and

opportunities for artists and historians who want to do work with the elderly.

On the local level, Louise Saul of the Sentinel reports about a $600 grant initiated by the East Brunswick school system entitled, "All Ages Working Together".

Hilda Issacson and Phyllis Green, two sixth grade teachers, devised the program joined by the school librarian, reading specialist, principal, and township supervisor on the aged. During the first six weeks of the project, 68 sixth grade students wrote letters to local senior citizens telling about their backgrounds and asking to know more about their pen pals. The students spent several weeks preparing a list of 40 questions to ask senior citizens and invited their pen pals to the school. Children were asked to limit their conversations so that the senior citizens would have a chance to speak.

The purpose of the program was to erase the stereotyping of older people and to have children and senior citizens meeting and communicating together.

The senior citizens were positive about meeting and keep talking about how they enjoyed it. The children learned it was much harder to be young many years ago, and are ready to learn more about senior citizens.

The research shows that senior citizens are mainly viewed negatively. However, some positive advances are being made on the national, state, and local levels, but we still have a long way to go. In Margaret Mead's words, if you asso-

ciate enough with older people who do enjoy their lives, who are not stored away in any golden ghettos, you will gain a sense of continuity and the possibilities for a full life. (Mead 1977, p. 27)

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